

CLAIMS

1-50. (Canceled)

51. (Currently Amended) ~~The medical implant system of claim 50~~ A medical implant system comprising:

a first bone anchor having a first proximal head and a first distal threaded shank;

a second bone anchor having a second proximal head and a second distal threaded shank;

and

a brace assembly comprising:

a shell coupled to the first proximal head;

a brace having a longitudinal axis and a slot longitudinally displaced along the brace;

a pair of bearings displaced on opposite sides of the brace and positioned between the brace and the shell, each of the pair of bearings riding within the slot longitudinally displaced along the brace, wherein the bearings allow for slidingly adjusting and pivoting the brace relative to the first proximal head along at least a portion of a longitudinal length of the brace;

wherein the brace assembly further comprises means for transmitting torque between the brace and the first distal threaded shank that ~~wherein the means for transmitting torque includes a~~ first key at a distal end of the brace temporarily mated to a recess area on the first proximal head.

52. (Currently Amended) ~~The medical implant system of claim 25~~ A medical implant system comprising:

a first bone anchor having a first proximal head and a first distal threaded shank;

a second bone anchor having a second proximal head and a second distal threaded shank;

and

a brace assembly comprising:

a shell coupled to the first proximal head;

a brace having a longitudinal axis and a slot longitudinally displaced along the brace;

a pair of bearings displaced on opposite sides of the brace and positioned between the brace and the shell, each of the pair of bearings riding within the slot longitudinally displaced along the brace, wherein the bearings allow for slidingly adjusting and pivoting the brace relative to the first proximal head along at least a portion of a longitudinal length of the brace; and

wherein the brace has a first position in which a longitudinal axis of the brace is generally in line with a longitudinal axis the first bone anchor and a second position in which the longitudinal axis of the brace is pivoted approximately 90 degrees from the first position.

53. (Currently Amended) A medical implant comprising:
a first bone anchor having a first proximal head and a first distal threaded shank; and
a brace assembly coupled to the first proximal head, the brace assembly comprising:
a brace having a first end portion and a second end portion; and
a pair of bearings displaced on opposite sides of the brace, each of the pair of
bearings riding within a slot longitudinally displaced along the brace, wherein the brace
has a first position in which a longitudinal axis of the brace is generally in line with a
longitudinal axis of the first bone anchor and a second position in which the longitudinal
axis of the brace is pivoted approximately 90 degrees from the first position.

54. (Previously Presented) The medical implant of claim 53 wherein the first proximal
head is polyaxially coupled to the brace assembly.

55. (Previously Presented) The medical implant of claim 53 wherein the first end portion
of the brace is at least partially ball shaped.

56. (Previously Presented) The medical implant of claim 53 wherein the brace is curved.